Yankee Fishermen in Arctic Seas

Dangers and Hardships Encountered in the Far North

ST. JOHN'S, N. F., Aug. 12.—The Gloucester fishing vessel American put into this port recently for repairs, having been crushed by the ice floe in the Arctic seas so badly that it was feared she would founder with all hands. A few days later a second schooner, the Clara, arrived here in similar plight. Their experience is by no means exceptional, for this peril of the northern floe must be faced by every craft that ventures there. Yet the daring Gloucester fishermen count it as but one of the smaller hazards of the voyage.

Among the world's fisherfolk to-day there are not any who can compare in energy and enterprise, boldness and resource with the hardy fellows who man the New England trawlers and who were described by Kipling in his "Captains Courageous." They fearlessly face every peril of ocean, every rigor of climate. They invade yearly the frigid waters of Baffinland, Greenland and Iceland and bring back cargoes of cod and halibut, though at the cost of a heavy toll in human life and suffering.

On Aug. 3 the Allan liner Ionian, with 750 passengers aboard, reached Quebec, four days overdue, having been delayed four days in Belle Isle Strait by dense fogs and numberless icebergs. Yet, many weeks prior to that, the daring Yankee fishermen were plying their vocation well within the Arctic Circle, two or three hundred miles north of Belle Isle.

In April, after the early floes, with their lading of hair seals, are borne south past the Newfoundland coast to become the prey of the sealmen, while the floes disperse into fragments over the Grand Banks, the American fishing smacks make their way north, fishing all up the Newfoundland shore and battling with floes and bergs until they make the halibut banks beyond Ungava, at the mouth of Hudson Bay. Some seasons, when ice is scarce, this objective is reached early; but other years, like the present, with floes exceptionally heavy and widespread, the passage is much longer and is attended with grave peril.

Such was the experience of the American, some 200 miles north of Belle Isle, on July 2, while trawling for halibut. A sister ship, the Corona, was near her, the first anchored in 160 fathoms of water and the second in 190 fathoms.

They prepared for setting their trawls, but as the dories left the ship the white wall of advancing floe was seen on the horizon, ten miles away, coming down swiftly in the grip of the resistless Labrador current. It was a glistening barrier, bristling with pinnacles and jagged points, standing fully twenty feet above water.

The Corona, being farthest from it, hoisted anchor, spread sail and worked away toward safety, but the American, being caught within the jaws of a sort of bay, had no alternative but to try to work through it and escape by some convenient lead of water.

The wind was light, but the current was strong, and as this met the ship it swung her about so that she entered the floe stern foremost. The steel-blue mass closed around her and stood high above the decks and sail was made to get her under control.

But the ice rafted against the obstruction she formed, her rudder was smashed, her gear parted, her seams opened and the ice engirdled her, big cakes working over onto the deck. The crew realized their desperate situation, for soon a distress signal was set in the rigging; but it was impossible for the Corona to approach, though her dories were manned to attempt save the crew if the vessel had to be abandoned.

The American, in a last endeavor to extricate herself, set all her canvas at the risk of having her spars torn out, and by great good fortune worked clear. It took six days to reach St. John's, and during all that time her wearied crew toiled constantly at the pumps.

Early in the season these vessels are usually held off Bell Isle by the ice masses, but as the summer advances they push their way onward along the Labrador coast, fishing whenever the chance offers. It was while so engaged that the Clara came by her mishap.

She was caught inshore by a landward breeze, which swept along a dense ice-pack in its wake, a mighty mass of frozen prairie extending as far as the eye could reach, a solid wall fifteen to twenty-five feet high. She made sail and tried to run beyond it, but it had the weather gauge of her, and its advance guard encircled her, battering against her sides, opening her seams and damaging her rudder, the weakest spot in these craft.

Luckily her crew had seen the danger early and acted with vigor and so escaped.

Later still in the season the schooners work north to Baffinland and Greenland. Here lie the great submarine plateaus where halibut abound. These fish always command high prices and so make this venture attractive, despite its perils.

The halibut is among the largest of edible fish and is caught with trawls, long ropes anchored on these banks and containing hundreds of hooks attached to the main rope by thinner lines, the hooks being baited with fish entrails. The trawls are set, tended and removed by dories, small flat-bottomed boats, each carrying two men.

The dories go out daily, placing the trawls in a wide radius over the Banks, and the ship is left to the skipper and the cook. The whole business is a most hazardous one, for it requires uncommon courage to venture abroad on the face of the waters in these little cockleshell dories, with the whole ocean more or less covered with bergs and pans of ice, any one of which, striking a boat, would sink her.

Moreover, danger lurks everywhere. Each change of wind or variation of current creates new formations among the floes and makes new difficulties. One hour may see the ocean free of obstruction and several ships, with a fleet of dories, hard at work, while a little later they will all be enmeshed in the pack and essaying desperately to escape from its embrace.

Few situations are more hopeless than the latter, and scores of men perish every year as a result. The plight is specially perilous for the dories, which cannot withstand a heavy blow from an icemass.

The men when thus caught have to clamber onto the ice, and, dragging the dories with them, ferry them across water spaces they cannot cover otherwise, make their way toward the land, often without food and always without shelter, though many weary days and nights are spent in the task.

Very often the currents and winds drive the ice off shore; or fog shuts down and they lose track of their ship. In either case they are adrift in the very worse of waters—areas thickly strewn with bergs and cakes, and with little hope of rescue.

Hunger and cold add to the menace of wind and sea and floe, and the frail skiffs drive about, day after day, until the ocean swallows them or they are found by some passing craft, so maimed from frostbite as to be, perhaps, unfit for active exertion ever again.

The vessels are as harshly dealt with as the dories sometimes. When storms arise and the fog blanket is swept across the waters, anxiety is keen on the little smacks.

If a craft is nipped between the floes her doom is sealed. When the cakes beat against her sides she starts to leak and often foundern as the ramming continues. If she strikes a berg full tilt, she goes to pieces like a house of cards.

If fortune favors her, she can cut her cable and run, or be towed out of danger by her dories, but if conditions are adverse the crew count themselves lucky to escape with their lives. The schooner Corona, which was near the American when the latter met her mishap, narrowly escaped serious injury herself a few days later.

The weather being fine, her crew started out to set their trawls, but suddenly, after they had been out a few hours, the fog shut in quickly, and before it cleared again the ship could hear the rush and beat of the ice floe coming down from the north. The fog cleared away as rapidly as it came, when the wall of crystal was seen to be only two feet from the vessel.

There was only one thing to do, and that was to cut the cable. This was immediately accomplished, and the vessel worked clear of the danger area and awaited her dorymen, who were out in their skiffs trying to save as much of the trawls as possible.

This was a very risky proceeding, as ahead of the pack itself was about a mile of smaller broken ice, to thread the way through which was not easy, but two of the dories worked into it almost to the very face of the pack and recovered much of their gear. And then the vessel, safe from the grasp of the floe, hurried away to a safer fishing ground.

Not all are so lucky as this, and many a fine vessel is crushed beyond all hope every season or overwhelmed by the floe, while not a few vanish with all on board, leaving no trace of the manner in which ruin overtook them.

Still, in spite of all, the brief summer months find these daring men in the waters of Iceland or Greenland, making their headquarters at Reykjavik or Disco when they need stores, and trawling the waters outside whenever the ice permits them to let down a line. The work is of the most toilsome kind.

It often happens that men work till they fall helpless from want of sleep, and cases have been known where men have never washed themselves or changed their clothing for a whole trip, though this usually occupies two or three months. This arises from the fact that besides catching the fish, the crew have also to wash, clean and salt it and then pack it away in the hold. All these operations must be most carefully performed.

Life on a Yankee fishing vessel in the Far North is therefore not to be lightly undertaken, and, what with its perils and toils, only the strongest and most reckless fishermen will engage in it. The ships have to be of the very best, or else they will never survive, and the wages rule higher than in any other marine vocation, for otherwise crews could not be induced to join them. And the food and cooking also are first class, the cooks being as highly paid as the captains.

In the Far North during these months there is almost no night, and in the perpetual day the crews are able to set trawls at almost any hour. There are no other ships in those waters save the Danish war craft which patrol there, or some lumbering whaler driven out of her course.

And so, when disaster comes to a fisherboat, there is all the less chance of escape for ship or men. The ice floes will occasionally bear south the mute evidences of some catastrophe, the odds and ends which indicate that a ship had struck it, or that humans had camped thereon.

An arctic dog sled was found on a floe last year, off Labrador, whose owner and dogs had probably perished. Another time a lot of seamen's gear and food tins were found, though no tidings were ever learned of the people themselves, while pieces of skin kyacks, wooden boats and canvas tents proclaim the fate of Esquimau or civilized wayfarers.

When homeward bound these Yankee fishing vessels also are subjected to many perils, for they are driven at racing speed, so as to reach market as soon as possible, and often not a sail is reefed or a rope changed during the whole voyage, no matter what the weather, until it is cause for wonder how they can survive. With reckless daring sail is carried until the spars threaten to go, and it is only when she is in dire danger that they will reduce canvas.

Some skippers will never shorten sail while another vessel carries it, and the rivalry between them as to which will douse first is occasionally carried to the point where the elements dispose of it by breaking a topmast and crippling the craft.

CASE LIKE THAT OF S. L. DANA.

An Old Detective Reminded of the Shooting of Smith in Madison Square.

"It looks to me," said an old-time detective yesterday, "as though the shooting of Samuel L. Dana will never be cleared up. It reminds me of a shooting case, similar in many ways, which the police were never able to explain.

"It happened early in March, 1887, when, at 1 o'clock in the morning, two policemen heard a pistol shot in Madison Square Park and found a young man sitting on a bench with a bullet wound in his shoulder.

"The injured man was George Day Condit Smith, a student in a Brooklyn business college. He told the police that he was walking through the park with his head down when the sound of footsteps caused him to look up. A tall stranger was within four feet of him, he said, and without warning fired at him and ran.

"The injured man said that he had never seen his assailant before. A nighthawk cabman told of seeing a man run away, but that was all the corroboration that could be obtained. There were no marks of powder around the bullet hole and the police decided that Smith had not shot himself.

"The girl to whom Smith was engaged called at the hospital to see him the next day and a newspaper said that she had formerly been engaged to a well known college athlete. The athlete was arrested, but proved an alibi and was immediately released. That is as far as the police ever were able to go in the case."

$2 HEAD MONEY, PLEASE.

A New York Manufacturer Finds a Kink in the Immigration Law.

James G. Wilson, a manufacturer, twenty-five years a resident of this city, but still a British subject, recently found a kink in the Immigration law which went into effect last March.

When on his way home a few days ago after a business trip to Montreal, he was approached as he sat in the parlor car by an immigrant inspector who inquired his nationality, and learning that he was an alien resident of the United States demanded a two-dollar head tax.

Mr. Wilson told how long he had been a resident of the United States, declined to pay the tax, and treated the matter as a joke. The inspector left him with the assurance that it was no joke and that he would be put off the train before it crossed the border unless he paid the $2.

At Alburg another inspector came and made the same demand. Mr. Wilson's explanation that he had gone back and forth between the United States and Canada fifty times in the last twenty-five years was of no avail, and when he finally refused to pay the tax he was placed under arrest. Then, in order to avoid further annoyance and inconvenience he made protest, paid the money, and was permitted to resume his journey

On reaching New York Mr. Wilson addressed a letter to the British Consulate detailing the treatment he had received, and asking whether the exaction was lawful. The reply of the acting Consul was that by the new law an alien resident of the United States must pay the $2 head tax whenever he reenters the country after a trip abroad.

No length of residence can exempt him from the tax, and it is just as much payable on his fiftieth return journey as upon the occasion when he first entered the country. As Mr. Wilson was about to take another visit to Montreal he inquired of the consulate whether he could obtain any form of passport that would exempt him from the payment of the head tax, and the reply came that a passport would avail him naught.

Mr. Wilson's friends are advising him to appeal to the British Ambassador at Washington with a view to setting on foot diplomatic representations to the State Department as to the hardship to which long resident aliens are exposed by reason of this provision of the Immigration law.

JESSE POMEROY'S LATEST TRY.

New England's Famous Convict Caught Digging Through His Cell Wall.

BOSTON, Mass., Aug. 13.—Another attempt on the part of Jesse Pomeroy, New England's most famous convict, to escape from the Charlestown State Prison has just been prevented. Although kept in solitary confinement, in an inner prison, in some manner he managed to secure a knife blade, a screw driver, which he fashioned into a chisel, and a piece of strong, sharp wire.

With these implements he was attempting to dig out of his cell when one of the night guards heard a faint scratching and summoned the reserve officers of the prison. They crept silently along the corridor, suddenly flung open the door of Pomeroy's cell and caught the prisoner in the act.

Pomeroy was sentenced to death in 1876 for the murder of a five-year-old boy. He was only 15 years old at the time and lived in Dorchester. After being arrested he also confessed to the murder of another child.

He was sentenced to death, but the sentence was commuted to life imprisonment by Gov. Rice, on condition that the lad be kept in solitary confinement and that he be allowed to communicate with no one besides the keepers and his mother, who has visited him once a month ever since.

Pomeroy is now 43 years of age and has developed into a man of much intellectual power. He has educated himself to a considerable degree and declares that every recollection of his youthful deeds of violence has passed out of his mind and that he would not willingly harm a fly.

His one mania is to obtain his liberty, and he is constantly scheming and plotting to that end. Whenever his mother visits him the couple are watched, and when she brings him fruit it is invariably cut open and examined. On one occasion, it is said, a small file was discovered in a banana.

Pomeroy is now confined in a building within the prison yard called by the prisoners "Cherry Hill." His cell has a wooden floor, although there is stone underneath, and the convict once believed that he could cut a hole through that and escape. He made a fine saw from a piece of wire which he secured from under the top rim of his tin dipper. With this implement he worked patiently day after day until he had nearly cut out a complete square in the floor.

The keepers make a minute examination of Pomeroy's cell at intervals and one day they came in with buckets of water, which they poured over the floor. Soon most of the water had disappeared and the cracks were discovered.

Pomeroy came the nearest to effecting his escape several years ago, when confined in the old prison building, which is constructed of great blocks of stone. He had succeeded in loosening one of these blocks until a push would have sent it tumbling into the yard.

A policeman saw the stone tottering and gave the alarm. A rush was made for the famous prisoner's cell, but when the officers entered Pomeroy displayed little concern. He declined to tell what tools he had used and what he had done with the mortar dug from the walls.

After that extra precautions were taken and the cell rebuilt until it looked like a stone quarry. The door opening into the corridor was walled up and a new one cut into another cell, so that it became necessary to go through two doors to get into Pomeroy's apartment. A small hole into the corridor was left, and through this a keeper watched the prisoner's movements much of the time. Later Pomeroy was removed to "Cherry Hill," where he has a very pleasant cell, as prison cells go, but from which it is believed that he can never escape.

FLAT LIFE FOR HORSES.

With Elevator Service, Too—Some Will Not Walk Upstairs.

Ground space is so valuable in New York that, like many other buildings here, stables have long been built upward in many stories, with stalls for the horses on floors above the ground; so that there are now in the city thousands of horses that may be said to live in flats. Stables of six stories are no longer considered remarkable, and in many of these horses are now stalled on three floors, these upper stories being reached by runways.

All of these tall modern stables have an elevator big enough and strong enough to carry to the upper floors any vehicle, and in at least one downtown boarding place for horses the elevator is used for the animals, also.

Out of 150 horses kept in this stable there are perhaps a score that are more or less often hoisted to their rooms, or stalls, at night, and they also bring down some horses in the same way. The horses like it and stand steady on the elevator platform and are hoisted without trouble. In fact they have one fine horse that will not travel from the ground floor to its stall in any other way When this horse comes in and is unhooked at night it walks straight over to the elevator and waits to be hoisted up; and when it is cast loose in its stall in the morning it makes straight for the elevator again.

REPUBLICAN WOMEN READY.

THEY HAVE PLANNED TO WORK HARD IN THE CANVASS.

In Four States They Will Try to Win Women's Votes—In Others They Will Influence Voters Through Their Women Folks—Task of New York Women.

WASHINGTON, Aug. 13.—That women are to play an important part in the coming Presidential campaign is evident from the preparations now being made. The campaign will not open for the women until the first week in September, but their headquarters have been chosen and campaign literature is being prepared for distribution by them.

The National Woman's Republican Association, the only national political organization of women in the country, will figure conspicuously in the canvass, particularly in the four States where unrestricted woman suffrage prevails—Utah, Colorado, Idaho and Wyoming. Its headquarters will be at Denver, in charge of Mrs. J. Ellen Foster, the association's president. Chicago and New York city also will have headquarters in connection with the regular headquarters of the Republican national committee.

Chairman Cortelyou has assigned rooms in the Brown Palace Hotel in Denver to Mrs. Foster, and from this point she will conduct the women's campaign in Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming Assisting her will be Miss Estelle Reel, superintendent of the Indian schools, whose work for McKinley in 1900 caused him to appoint her to this office.

When Mr. McKinley found how big the feminine vote had been in Wyoming he began asking questions. When he was told that it was due principally to the efforts of Miss Reel he expressed surprise that such practical results had come from a woman's efforts.

The friends of Miss Reel then told him what manner of woman Miss Reel was, giving him a history of her political work in Wyoming and the other Western States. The result of the conversation was her appointment.

Miss Reel is now in the West on a tour of inspection among the Indian schools. As soon as this is completed she will go into the campaign to do what she can for Roosevelt and Fairbanks.

Mrs. Foster will direct all the work in the West and will be consulted about that which is to be done in the East. In addition to her executive duties she will make speeches in Colorado and Idaho.

One notable piece of work by Mrs. Foster in the past was to organize Republican clubs in the four States where women vote and to bring them all under the Woman's National Republican Association. Before Mrs. Foster began work women's political clubs in these States were started in campaign time, only, as a rule, to die out as soon as the elections were over.

Mrs. Foster changed all this, and made the Republican clubs perpetual. Officers were elected for terms of four years, and instead of having to form clubs at the beginning of every campaign, those who were connected with the Woman's National Republican Association kept things going between fights by doing a little educational work.

The Democratic women of the Western States meet their Republican sisters with similar organizations, but they are generally formed only at the beginning of each campaign. In the East the women of the Democratic party appear to take much less interest in politics than the Republicans.

Most of the literature for the coming campaign is being prepared in New York and, as a matter of fact, the New York women will take almost as active a part as the women of Colorado, Idaho, Utah and Wyoming. Already a number of parlor meetings have been held in New York, according to the information received by Miss Helen Varick Boswell, organization secretary of the national association. Miss Boswell is now in Washington, but is in close touch with all that is going on in New York.

The distribution of the campaign literature for the whole country will be in charge of Mrs. Foster, the national president; Mrs. Alice Rossiter Willard, campaign secretary, and Miss Boswell. All the literature for the West will be sent out by Miss Willard from her headquarters in the Auditorium Hotel, Chicago. Miss Boswell will have charge of the literature for the East.

This literature will not be identical for all parts of the country, but will be prepared and distributed with a view to what is needed in particular localities. The main issues to be discussed by the women are the tariff, finance and the attitude of President Roosevelt on the labor question. Women will be told of the practical effect of the tariff upon household affairs.

It is interesting to note that one woman is writing most of this literature. She is Mrs. Cornelia Robinson of New York city, vice-chairman of the executive committee of the Women's Republican Association of New York. Mrs. Robinson is a well known student of social and political economics. Her leaflet on the money question was used as a campaign document by the Republicans in 1900.

Just where the headquarters in New York city will be has not yet been determined. The work will be under the direction of Mrs. James Griswold Wentz, president of the State organization.

Mrs. A. J. Wilson is another New Yorker who will figure prominently in the work in behalf of Roosevelt and Fairbanks. She is president of the West End Woman's Republican Club. The members of this organization do real work. The part Mrs. Wilson will play indicates what manner of folk control the destinies of the club to which she belongs.

It is she who will collect the sinews of war. She will have charge of the campaign committee and will overlook, also, the distribution of the literature throughout the city.

To Mrs. Clarence Burns will fall the work in the tenement district. She will have as her assistant Miss Mildred Reid. Both of these women are members of the Little Mothers, an organization well known on the East Side, Mrs. Burns being its president.

Their work entails a house to house canvass of the tenement district, where they go with interpreters to work among the women. On account of this work the New York campaign literature will be printed in five different languages, English, German, Italian, French and Yiddish.

Three other women who will take active parts in the campaign work are Mrs. Camden C. Dike, Mrs. Jane Pierce and Mrs. Andrew J. Perry.

When seen by a reporter at her apartments in the Cairo here, Miss Boswell talked freely about plans and issues. Asked for her views on the woman in politics she said: "A woman is undoubtedly vitally concerned in the administration of public affairs. Whether she votes or not, whatever affects the men of her family affects her.

"If the tariff affects the question of wages as well as the price of household necessaries, who feels it more than the woman? If there is financial stringency, where does the economizing begin, and who has to be responsible for most of it? Why, the woman of course.

"Therefore, she should know what is going on in order that she may use her influence with the men to make them vote for what is right. After all it is the woman in the home that makes the home, and her influence is boundless in consequence.

"Our aim is to educate women up to the point where they can and will think intelligently upon what affects their home interests. Our purpose is simply one of education. We do not bother with religious questions, temperance questions or suffrage questions. We are content to let them alone. Upon tariff, finance and labor questions, however, we lay stress.

"I believe that every woman should be a repeater in the best sense of the word. She should vote two or three times through her husband, her brothers and her sweetheart. Put a woman to work on the masculine members of her household and she can do a great deal if she knows her subject.

"That is our part. We try to equip them with the necessary information and then let them go ahead and steer their men in the right paths."

SEVERN TEACKLE WALLIS.

A Public Statue Commemorative of the Late Distinguished Marylander.

PARIS, Aug. 8.—I have seen, at the celebrated bronze foundry of Barbedienne, a cast of a statue of the late Severn Teackle Wallis of Baltimore, which is presently to be erected in that city. It is of heroic dimensions and I inclose a photograph which THE SUN is at liberty to reproduce.

A committee of his fellow citizens has deemed his memory worth perpetuating in this way as a testimony of the regard in which they held him living and to the end that the example of his life and character should not be lost to posterity. Teackle Wallis never

did anything very remarkable; he never held a conspicuous office nor ever wanted one. He was just a Baltimore lawyer, with a practice sufficient to the modest needs of his most moderate life; a very able lawyer, it is true, but one whose occasions at the bar never brought him within the limelight of a great or national publicity. For all that his life was retiring and inconspicuous, that no appanage of wealth or place attached to it, and that he quit it almost as poor as when he began it, it was felt that in him had departed the First Gentleman of the State and the most distinguished and honored member of his profession that Baltimore had known. This monument therefore is to commemorate the personal qualities of Teackle Wallis, his perfect cleanliness of character, his many accomplishments, his profound learning, and, above all, that moral and intellectual distinction which, in spite of himself, made him great among his fellow men.

It is an agreeable reflection that the gentlemen who have sought to honor his memory will escape the common fate of persons who have had similar ambitions. The statues of our public men are too often better designed to exasperate than to assuage, and invite derision rather than excite any worthier emotion. Teackle Wallis's townsmen may well be congratulated. They will get an admirable statue, a work of art most distinguished in style and masterly in execution, and, considered as a portrait, leaving nothing to be desired. The lean elegance of that spare figure, the poise of the head, the keen, kindly eye beneath the bushy brows, the firm, finely modelled chin—everything that denoted the physical Wallis is there. It is a statue that Baltimore should be proud of.

Laurent Honoré Marquesté is the sculptor, a member of the Institute, a pupil of Jouffroy and Falguière, and a Toulousan. He is an artist of great reputation, and both he and his work have long been well known to that great art critic and most distinguished student and expert in the fine arts, Mr. George Lucas. Mr. Lucas, as everybody knows, is one of the most honored figures in the *vie intime* of the Parisian art world. He, too, is a Marylander, who came to Paris some fifty-two years ago to spend two weeks and has never since managed to return.

ANT PEST IN NEW ORLEANS.

A Call on the Federal Government to Assist in Suppressing It.

NEW ORLEANS, Aug. 13.—L. O. Howard, chief of the Bureau of Entomology of the United States Department of Agriculture, has, on the petition of Prof. Blouin of the Louisiana Sugar Experiment Station and Supt. Baker of Audubon Park, agreed to take up the pest of ants in New Orleans. At first Dr. Howard was disposed to regard the complaints about the ants as exaggerated. Recently, however, the ants have become so damaging to trees and plants, affecting the fig crop in particular, that energetic action has been decided on.

The ant pest in New Orleans is of recent origin. It is not known when these ants arrived, nor where they came from.

Red and black ants of the stinging variety have always existed here, but not in sufficient numbers to be troublesome. Some four or five years ago a red ant somewhat larger than those already here made its appearance. It was first noted by housewives because of its depredations in the pantries.

It was not a stinger to the same extent as the older varieties, but it proved extremely combative, and within a year it had attacked and exterminated the older species. It practically destroyed nearly all other household insects, especially the roaches.

Originally confining their depredations to pantries and to other insects, the newcomers, as they increased—and their growth was phenomenal—became troublesome to gardeners. They attacked plants, and especially fruit, and they damaged trees of nearly all kinds.

The most recent complaints are that the fig crop, an important one in Louisiana, has been seriously injured by the ants, which devour the ripe figs.

The popular idea in New Orleans is that the ants were brought here in the river sand used for filling low lots. It is not improbable that the better drainage of New Orleans during the last few years may be responsible for the spread of the ants by drying up the porous soil on which the city is built and which used to be water soaked.

Southern Moss Now Article of Commerce.

From the St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Poets have written fetchingly about the long gray festoons of Spanish moss, word painters have told how it seemed to mourn over the solitary graves in Southern woodlands, tourists have strained after sentimental phrases to express the feelings the sight of great oaks draped with it has awakened in their bosoms, but down in the country where it grows they stuff horse collars with it.

The sweeping moss of the Southern forests is linked with commerce. It fills mattresses for beds and cushions for buggies. It is useful for packing and it is gathered as any other crop is gathered by people who are paid by the day. Moss is ginned as cotton is ginned; the outer cuticle of the fibre is removed and leaves it much like horse hair. It is then good for anything that needs stuffing. In Louisiana, instead of merely a detail of swamp scenery, it is the basis of an industry. Bales of it are shown as part of the Louisiana forestry display.

It still waves in the Gulf breezes where it is unmolested, and the mocking bird, perhaps, veils itself from the moonlight behind it as it trills out its full notes to its mate; it still gives that funereal aspect to the banks of hundreds of miles of bayous and makes distinct from any other landscape in the world the scenery of our Southern States, but the utilitarian eye sees in it only so many bales at so much per bale, f. o. b., delivered at Northern furniture factories.

G. A. R.'S BOSTON ENCAMPMENT.

Great Plans to Entertain the Visitors—Candidates for Commander-in-Chief.

BOSTON, Aug. 13—Boston is gay with bunting in honor of the gathering of the Grand Army of the Republic, which begins here to-morrow its annual encampment. It is expected that there will be fully half a million visitors in Boston during the week, and of this number about fifty thousand will be veterans.

The week will start off in a lively fashion. To-morrow at 10 o'clock there will be a parade of the soldiers who were captured and confined in Confederate prisons. Marching with them will be the bluejackets and marines from the United States warships now in the harbor, and also the members of the Naval Brigade of Massachusetts

On Tuesday comes the parade, in which it is expected fully twenty thousand veterans will be in line. The route is a short one. Time has left its mark on the old soldiers, and they will have barely three miles to cover, and of this distance all but about 2,500 feet is over macadam or asphalt roads

A spectacular feature of the parade will be the reviewing stand on the Common at the head of Temple place. In this stand will be the "Living Flag," in which 2,000 children—their red, white and blue attire making a reproduction of the national colors—will cheer and sing as the column marches past.

The sessions of the encampment will begin on Wednesday morning, and that evening will come the river carnival at Waltham. There are 4,000 canoes owned on the Charles River within easy distance of Waltham, and half of them will be seen in the river parade bearing colored lanterns and lights. There will also be a number of illuminated floats. Thursday afternoon 700 autos will carry the veterans to Concord.

A feature of the week will be a reception tendered to twenty-five distinguished ex-Confederate soldiers by Edward W. Kinsley Post 113 in Faneuil Hall on Monday night. The members of the noted Lafayette Post of New York are also to be the guests of their Boston comrades.

Little has been heard in the past month concerning Gen. Black's successor as Commander-in-Chief, but a quiet campaign has been conducted on behalf of Gen. Wilmon W. Blackmar of Hingham, Past Commander of the Department of Massachusetts. So far Gen. Blackmar's friends have heard of but two other candidates for the office, John C. Schotts of Yonkers and Allan C. Bakewell of New York, both past commanders of the Department of New York. It is understood here that the New York posts are pretty evenly divided upon these two men, and it is argued that this state of affairs helps the Massachusetts candidate's chances.

Girl Choked Mink to Death.

South Boston, Va., correspondence Richmond Times-Dispatch.

Miss Ada Newberry, who lives with her parents about two miles from this place, deserves credit for an act of bravery on her part. Wednesday morning about 2 o'clock she was awakened by the noise of a number of chickens in the coop out in the poultry yard.

Rising quickly and going without a light to the place whence the noise came, to her surprise she found a large mink devouring the chickens. Regardless of danger, she thrust her hand into the chicken coop, grabbed the intruder by the neck, and in spite of his determination to scratch and bite her, she choked the animal to death.

TOM TAGGART THE JOKER.

HE IS PARTICULARLY CLEVER AT SLEIGHT-OF-HAND WORK.

Samples of the Practical Jokes He Used to Play on His Friends—One Took Three Months to Prepare—Sausages, Steak and Potatoes in Another.

ROCHESTER, Aug. 13.—Thomas Taggart, chairman of the Democratic national committee, used to be a great practical joker, and many are the stories told in Indiana of the tricks that he played on his friends.

He has unusual skill as a sleight-of-hand performer. Formerly he was constantly using this gift in playing practical jokes on his friends. He doesn't do so much of it now, but there are many men in various parts of the country who will testify to his cleverness in this line.

Taggart's particular crony used to be State Treasurer King, who lived in Indianapolis. A joke that they put up on a friend of King is said to have taken them three months to hatch.

King had a friend, Arthur Johnston, who represented the McCormick Harvester Company of Chicago. Johnston owned a watch of very ingenious construction, which was valued at $800 and of which he was very proud.

King and Taggart decided to play a trick with the watch the next time Johnston came to town. They went to a jeweller and got a watch that in outward appearance resembled Johnston's. There was nothing to this watch except the case, and the inside was filled with a lot of unrelated springs and wheels.

Soon after Johnston arrived at Taggart's hotel, King started to talk about watches. Then Johnston made a remark about his own watch.

"Yes," said King to Taggart, "Johnston has the finest watch you ever saw; you would be interested to look at it."

At this Johnston pulled out his watch and handed it to Taggart to examine. Taggart looked at it carefully, held it up to his ear and finally said:

"Yes, it is a beauty. It is certainly the finest watch I ever saw."

Then he held it up for further examination and all of a sudden dropped it on the marble floor.

Johnston and Taggart both jumped for it with a cry of alarm, but it was too late. The watch was smashed into a hundred pieces. The floor for an area of three or four feet was covered with springs and wheels and other parts of the watch. The way Taggart sympathized with Johnston was amusing to those who were in on the joke.

"Well, that's too bad, isn't it?" said Taggart. "I suppose that watch must have cost you $75 or $100?"

Johnston went up in the air.

"A hundred dollars!" he gasped. "Why, man, that cost me $800."

"That's too bad, too bad," Taggart kept repeating. "I wonder if we can't get it fixed at the jeweller's across the street."

Such talk as this increased Johnston's fury.

"Fix that watch in an Indianapolis jewelry store!" cried he. "Why, that watch was made for me in Switzerland. There isn't a watchmaker in the United States that could make that watch."

Taggart continued to suggest fixing the watch, and Johnston was growing wilder every minute in trying to impress on Taggart the value of the watch and the damage that had been done. But Taggart kept on in an innocent, bland way, telling what a good jeweller the man across the street really was.

He got a plate and began to pick up the pieces, while Johnston stormed around. Finally all of the pieces were gathered up and Taggart started for the door, as if to go across the street. Then he stopped as if struck with a new thought, and began to put the wheels and springs back into the case himself.

"There," said Taggart, as he completed the job and surveyed it with apparent pride; "that wasn't as bad an accident as it seemed at first, was it?"

At this he handed back to Johnston his $800 watch, which he had been concealing in his clothes and shifted the dummy watch out of sight again.

"That watch seems to be all right after all, doesn't it?" he asked in the same innocent way.

Johnston took up his watch in a dazed manner and began to examine it. It was fully half a minute before he tumbled to what had happened.

First, he looked the timepiece all over, held it to his ear to assure himself that it was all right and opened the case to find that it had not been hurt. Then it dawned on him suddenly that he had been the victim of one of Tom Taggart's jokes. Johnston bought wine for the party.

Here is another story of Taggart's cleverness as a sleight-of-hand man. One day a travelling man, a particular friend of his, went to the desk of the hotel to register. After he had written his name, Taggart came up and shook hands with him, remarking:

"I'm sorry, but I don't see how we can keep you on the European plan here. This hotel is run on the American plan, you know."

This was said in such seriousness that the man never thought of a joke.

"Why, I want to stay on the American plan," said the traveller in surprise.

"No, you don't," replied Taggart. "You want to stay on the European plan and we can't keep you."

"What do you mean?" ejaculated the traveller, inclined to be angry. "I tell you I want to stay on the American plan, as I always have."

"Oh, well, if you insist," said Taggart, "I suppose you know what you want, but I imagined you intended only to get a room here and do your own cooking, judging by the provisions you brought along."

At this Taggart reached in the man's coat pocket and pulled out a string of bologna sausages. Then he reached in another pocket and brought out half a peck of potatoes. Then he pulled out a big porterhouse steak, from the man's collar.

All this time the man looked at Taggart in astonishment, until he grasped the joke and began to smile. Taggart never cracked a smile, but called a bellboy and told him to take the things to the kitchen, remarking to the man in a quizzical, suave manner:

"I beg your pardon for my mistake, I certainly thought you intended to do your own cooking when you brought all those provisions along."

Better Than a Pass.

From the Nashville Banner.

"Martinsburg, my State," says a Representative from West Virginia, "is just on the wind-up of a smallpox epidemic, and I am reminded of what happened to a picket one night when we were in this now thriving city during the civil war. An intelligent female of the African persuasion came along just about dark, and she was asked if she had a pass.

"'No, suh,' answered the woman, as her eyes beamed from beneath a big yellow handkerchief which adorned her head.

"'Then you can't pass,' said the guard.

"'I'se got no pass, but I'se got de smallpox, suh,' she added.

"You may rest assured that the woman passed without ceremony."